

10 Questions to Ask When Studying Your Bible

Introduction: Before you apply the 10 questions to your Bible study, it is important to approach your quiet time properly. As you apply the ten questions to your Bible study, these three words should help serve as the helpers in the process:

- ▶ Saturate—never underestimate the power of immersing yourself in the text by reading it and rereading it. Read it slowly and thoughtfully. Seek to remove distractions.
- ▶ Investigate—this is where the 10 questions come in, but investigation is also a matter of simply paying attention. Read the passage through while intentionally focusing on different aspects each time.
- ▶ Notate—determine to capture thoughts in writing (or typing). Allow your notation to reflect what you are learning as well as a wish list of what you'd like to learn.

Ten questions to enhance any Bible study:

1. WHO

When possible, determine human author and original audience. As much as possible, read the passage through the lens of the original audience.

Who are the characters in the text itself? What do you know about them? What can be known about them? What is their interrelation?

2. WHEN

When was this passage written?

Where does this passage fit on the Bible timeline? In what biblical era did it occur? Who were the contemporaries?

Relate biblical timelines to your own life or immediate history to gain a better understanding of spatial relationships.

Pay attention to time terms like after, before, during, meanwhile, days, weeks, months, years, etc.

3. WHERE

Learn to pushpin places. Insofar as possible, locate every place on a map.

Consider distance, bodies of water, road systems, topography, geo-political borders, natural barriers, etc.

Pay attention to words that indicate location, distance, and direction.

4. WHY

Don't forget to apply the 50,000 ft view to the text. The Bible is God's special and progressive revelation of Himself. The Bible follows the basic outline of Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Consummation. The Bible unfolds the story of Jesus Christ.

Determine why a particular book of the Bible was written.

Familiarize yourself with a general outline of that book in order to understand how the passage you are studying fits.

5. WHAT are the words or terms I do not understand?

Determine to look up any word you don't know. Don't skip this step.

Possible problems: Archaic words, technical words, idiomatic expressions.

Identify the ways by which those words/terms are used in other passages.

6. WHAT is the basic grammar of the passage?

You don't have to be a grammar expert to identify some key components in the passage.

Learn to identify the verbs.

Ask the question who or what before the verb in order to identify the subject.

Determine what kind of sentence you're reading: indicative; imperative; interrogative.

7. WHAT is the literary genre of the passage?

Genre simply refers to what kind of what sort of literature a passage happens to be.

Biblical genres can be categorized as follows: law, history, wisdom/poetry, prophecy, gospel, and epistles.

Additional Notes